



Developmental Disabilities Agencies Checklist

Information for Adults

Developmental Disabilities Agencies

can help you learn how to do a variety of things in your home and community. They have staff who are specially trained to teach you some of the things you want to learn to become more independent. They can't provide education, vocational training or recreational activities, but they can give you skill training in the things you choose to learn. Here are some things to think about when you choose an agency:

- ***Take your time.*** People who work for the agencies are there to help you with services you want and need. Choosing how and where you will spend your day is important.
- ***Shop around.*** Visit more than one agency. Observe over a period of time. If you are able, talk with people there who are receiving services. Shop for services you want.
- ***Listen to your feelings.*** Be sure you feel good about the people and services available through the agency.
- ***Be assertive.*** Ask all the questions you want to ask. Tell them what your hopes, needs, desires and wants are.

Before deciding, ask yourself:

- Should I keep shopping?
- Should I visit another day?
- Did I feel comfortable?

Important things to think about

The State has a list of rules that agencies must follow. When rules are followed, agencies are licensed.

- Ask when they were reviewed by the State. Were there problems?
- If so, how were they resolved?
- Do you know other people who get services from this agency? Talk to them.
- Ask them to tell you why they and their staff are qualified to work for you.
- Does the staff look tired and overworked?
- What kind of skills can they help you learn?
- Are they able to meet your needs?
- Does the staff have a variety of skills and abilities to communicate with all people with developmental disabilities?

- Do different people use the agencies for different amounts of time each week?
- Do they give you a choice of the amount of time you use the agencies?
- What type of training does the staff receive? How often?
- Do they answer your questions?
- Are you treated with respect?
- How would your person-centered plan (ISP) become part of the program?
- Can families stop by to observe at any time?
- How are decisions made about group size and activities?
- How do problems get solved?
- Is the agency a good choice or are there options? Will they help you get services in the community or your home if that's where you need them?
- Is there a variety of locations for obtaining services?
- Can you get physical or occupational therapy if you need them?
- Can you get speech therapy or psychotherapy if you need them?

Do they listen to you?

- Does the person talk directly to you during the interview?
- Does the person give you time to ask and answer questions for yourself?
- If you take along a friend or family member to the meeting, does the person spend more time talking to them than you?
- Were you allowed to visit for a period of time? On several occasions? Talk with people there?

Important things to think about

- The provider has references you can contact.
- The provider does not criticize or offer negative comments of other service providers, agencies or people while talking to you.
- The provider will see you without first looking at your files.
- Bathrooms and other facilities are accessible.

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